278 [563] The Chinese druggists, many of whom stocked among their traditional pharmacopeia a few modern medications, gave out occasionally to their customers information derived from the manufacturer's instructions for use. People with minor indispositions sometimes sought a druggist's advice. He suggested traditional or modern remedies, depending on the wishes of the customer. Thus, the druggists also acted as a bridge to the use of modern remedies.

484 Facets of Social Life Pertinent to Childbearing:

Communication and Transportation

People went to Minburi, and less often to Bangkok, to buy, sell, work, or visit relatives. A few adults had never been outside Bang Chan.

494 [484] [206] [493] Along the road buses passed Bang Chan every two or three hours during the daytime only. Minburi was a ten minute ride, Bangkok, an hour. Minburi had no taxis, and no telephone existed to call a taxi from Bangkok. Two or three persons owned bicycles.

505 484 Within Bang Chan, transportation varied with the season. From June to February travel was entirely by boat, even to a neighbor. A message to a local midwife, for instance, could be carried quickly by a speedy paddler in his skiff. If an emergency trip to the Minburi Health Center appeared necessary, a person could be rowed fairly comfortably along the canal that bordered the road. Going by boat to Bangkok, a whole day's row away, or four hours by the motor boat from Minburi, was not considered convenient even for passenger traffic, much less for a sick person or a woman in labor.

484 844 [494] The inconvenient time of year was the three month dry season. Boats then could hardly go on the canal that ran through the middle of Bang Chan, while the smaller canals became muddy or even dry. Walking barefoot over sharp stubble in tropical sun was hard. To transport a woman in labor, assuming she could stand it, an improvised stretcher could be made, but to subject her to the jolting bus was usually foolhardy. It was not customary to flag down passing cars. If things went wrong for a woman in labor during the hot, dry season, there was practically no chance of getting her to a hospital, and none of getting modern help to her.

243 433 Work Habits in the Economy

Because of the annual flood the land was admirably suited to growing a single bounteous crop of rice. After all needs for

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207 Exposure to the media of mass communication seems to act, in
212 a sense, as a substitute for literacy. It may be that through
546 these means either an illiterate farmer can obtain information
about the more complex agricultural tools and methods or motivation
to try improvements, or both, even though he may not know how to
read and write. One may infer that he tends to act on the infor-
mation thus obtained, since he is more likely than his unexposed
opposite number to try out these innovations.

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177 Acceptance of Urban Patterns

369 The printed word and the mass media are, of course, not solely
channels for the communication of knowledge. They are, at the
same time a means whereby the farmers may establish some sort of
contact with the more sophisticated world outside the community
even with highly urban Bangkok.

The survey indicates in a general way the extent to which
[291] the people of Bang Chan have accepted urban patterns. Their grow-
[416] ing acceptance of urban modes is readily apparent even to a casual
[207] visitor: many own shoes, flashlights, wrist watches, radios,
bicycles, fountain pens, modern furniture.* Other urban behavior
is likewise beginning to be noticeable.

• [493] One very simple indication of the degree to which urban in-
[413] fluences have penetrated is the change in manners of taking
[358] food. The farmers traditionally eat with their hands rather than
using a fork or spoon. In Bangkok, however, eating utensils are
customarily served with the meals in restaurants and are widely
adopted as well by the city population. Some Bang Chan inhabi-
177 tants have picked up this simple urban custom and have substituted
178 it for eating mainly with their hands. In Bang Chan of 1955, for
264 example, a sizeable minority (24 per cent) report that they use a
369 spoon, fork or both for the evening meal.

That such a simple question can roughly measure exposure
[207] to urban influences, is indicated in the following table, which
[546] shows that respondents who report customarily eating with "urban
utensils" are more likely to be exposed frequently to radio and
motion pictures and are more likely to have visited in Bangkok.

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[412] * Survey respondents report that their households possess a
flashlight (81 per cent); scissors (66 per cent); kerosene lamp
(27 per cent); radio (14 per cent). About 41 per cent say they
own at least one pair of shoes.